



**Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
Media and Communications Division**

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Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Proudly Supports Governor Ducey's Vision for Improving Education

EDUCATION FUNDING OUTLINED IN DUCEY'S FY 2019 BUDGET PLAN WILL HELP
ASDB MEET THE CRITICAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF AND/OR BLIND



(From left to right) ASDB Superintendent Reichman, Governor Ducey and ASDB Board President Syms

Phoenix, AZ, January 18, 2018 – Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (ASDB) Superintendent Annette Reichman proudly announces her full support of Governor Ducey's call to restore and increase education funding in his "Invest in Arizona" budget plan. Of particular importance, is Governor Ducey's proposal to provide ASDB with over \$2 million in funding for its Early Childhood and Family Education (ECFE) program. The ECFE program provides critical intervention and education services, like pre-literacy and cognitive development skills, for infants and toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing and/or visually impaired from birth to age three. While the number of families in Arizona participating in the ECFE program has rapidly grown by over 75% from 2011 to 2017, its funding level has remained the same.

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“Governor Ducey’s ‘Invest in Arizona’ budget outlines a clear path toward improving the quality of education for all kids in Arizona, one that will forever change the life outcomes of children who are deaf and/or blind,” said ASDB Superintendent Annette Reichman. “Governor Ducey’s proposal, with the support of Arizona legislators, will help ASDB recruit and retain teachers amidst a critical teacher shortage, and ensure families with infants and toddlers who are deaf and/or blind get the resources their children need to succeed.”

Governor Ducey’s Fiscal Year 2019 budget calls for \$1.6 million to help ASDB hire up to an additional 21 itinerant teachers for its statewide early childhood (birth to age three) program and an additional \$470,000 to help pay for the transportation these teachers will need to provide educational support to infants and toddlers within their home learning environments.

Inadequate funding has resulted in 17 teachers overburdened with the challenge of needing to provide services to 75%+ more children and families, from 257 families in 2011 to nearly 450 families in 2017, spread out across the state or 113,998 square miles of territory.

Superintendent Reichman continued, “Without adequate early intervention and support, without developing the pre-literacy and cognitive development skills necessary to read fluently and think critically, these children will not successfully transition to preschool, kindergarten and beyond.”

Superintendent Reichman concluded, “For making the full funding of ASDB’s early childhood and intervention program a top priority, Governor Ducey will be forever improving literacy, learning and life outcomes for thousands of children who are deaf and/or blind throughout our great state.”

ASDB is one of only five state agencies identified in Arizona law that is responsible for maintaining and implementing a comprehensive and coordinated interagency system of early childhood intervention services throughout Arizona, according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C (Arizona Department of Economic Security, 2017, AzEIP Central Directory of Resources).

The [Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind \(ASDB\)](#) was founded in 1912 – the year of Arizona’s statehood. ASDB educates over 2,000 children who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard-of-hearing, multisensory disabled or deaf-blind from birth to age 21. ASDB operates two schools for the deaf, one school for the blind, a statewide birth-to-three early childhood and family education program and five regional cooperatives. ASDB is dedicated to empowering young children and students with the educational opportunities necessary to succeed in college, career and life. For more information, contact Ryan Ducharme by email at ryan.ducharme@asdb.az.gov or by phone at 602-771-1092.

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